

Hear Ye! Hear Ye!



THE NEW ENGLAND SQUEAK
AND OTHER STORIES
BEING
THE STRANGE ADVENTURES
OF
HEROIC YET PRIMITIVE PEOPLE

BY

JAMES O. FAGAN
VISITORS GUIDE IN THE OLD SOUTH MEETING HOUSE
BOSTON

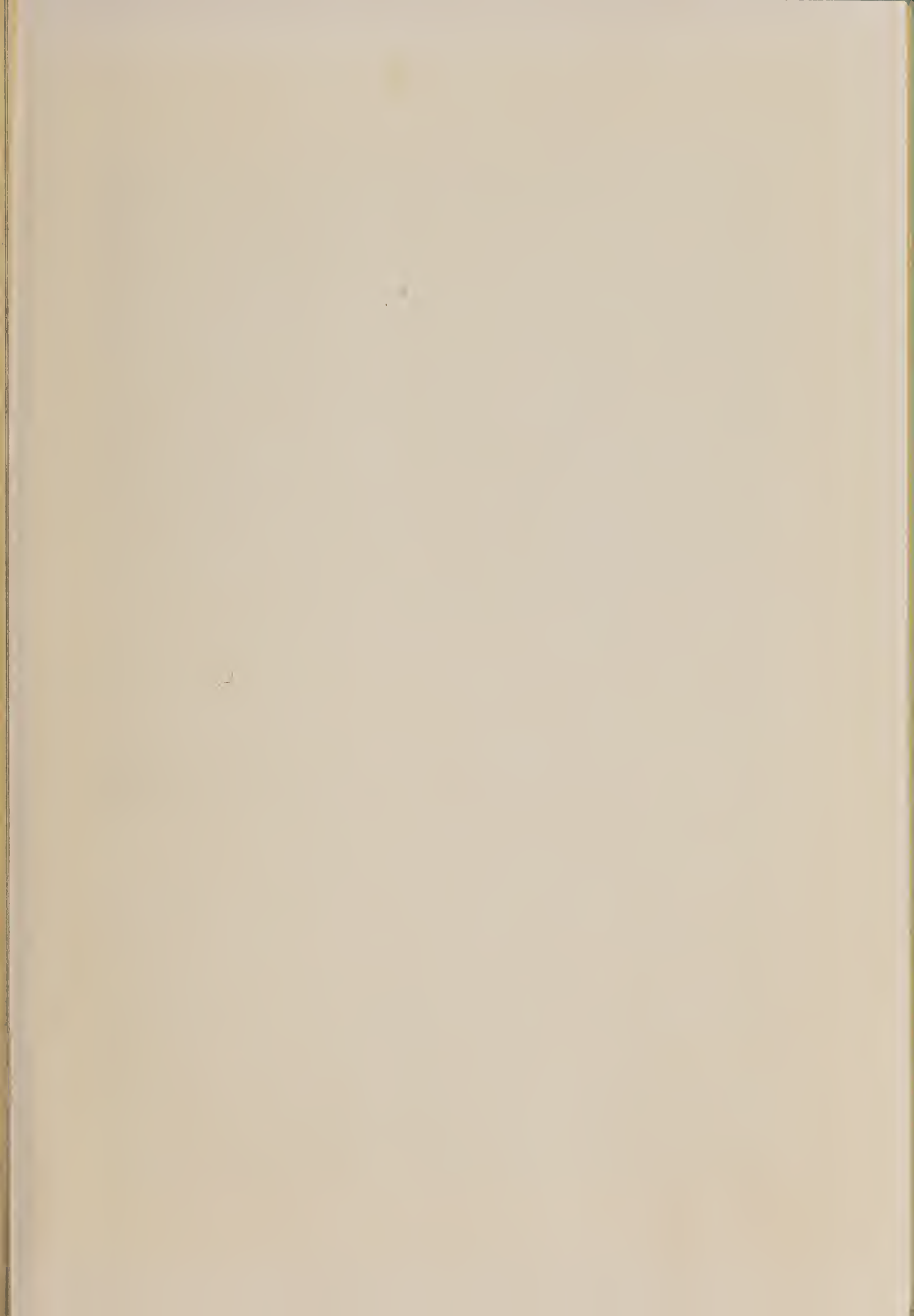
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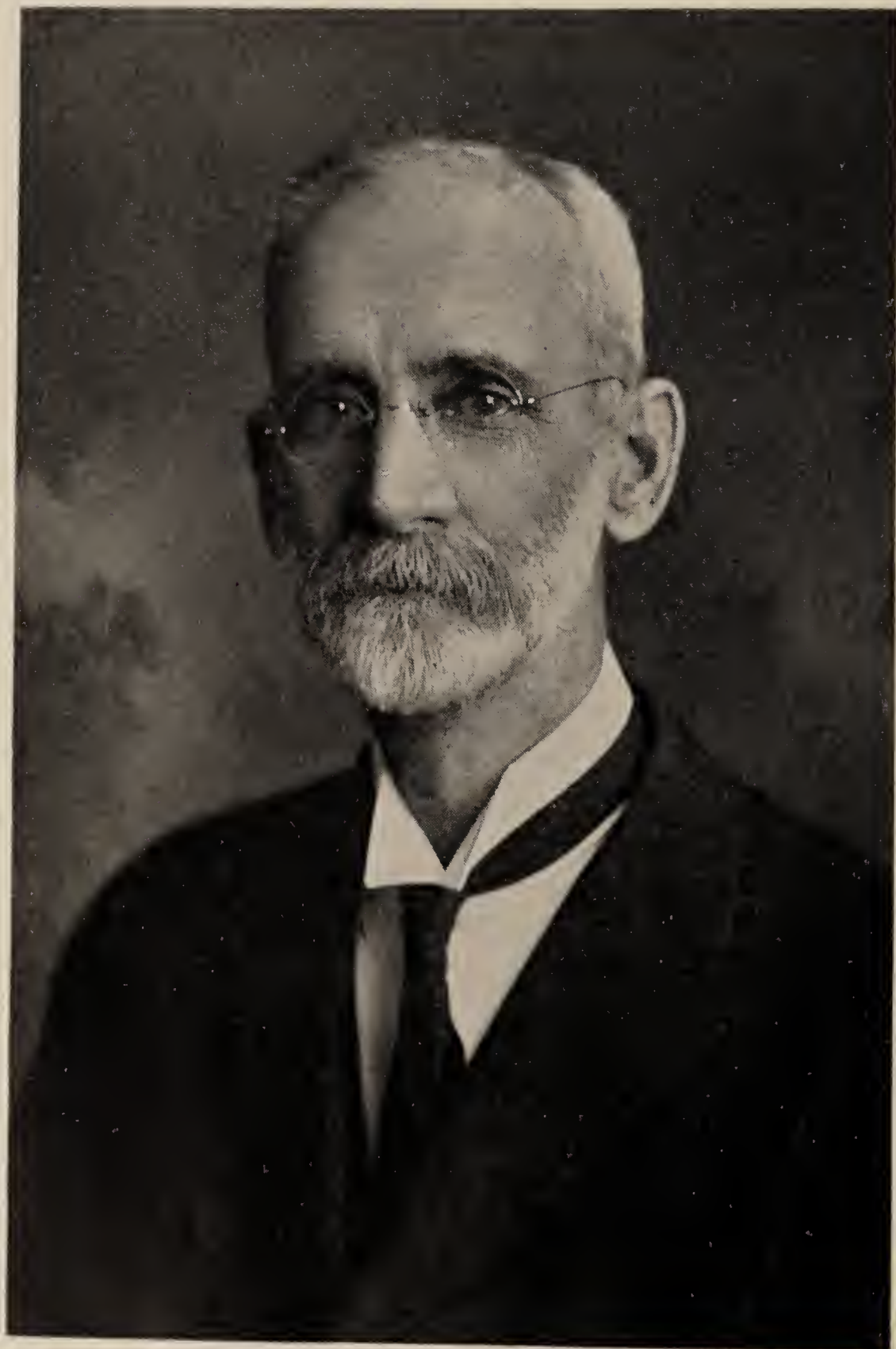
To Carlos

From Uncle Nalls

Feb 5, 1961







THE AUTHOR

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FOREWORD

THE HUMAN SIDE OF LIFE

The title and intent of this little book is a direct appeal to the good nature and humorous disposition of generously minded people.

James O. Fagan.

1934

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CHAPTER I

The New England Squeak

When one undertakes to say or to write anything about history from the romantic point of view, it is the privilege of a speaker or a writer to invite his audience to guess just where the romance comes in and the matter-of-fact history goes out. History is or should be concerned with facts; romance has a free hand. The romantic historian, however, has at all times one very strict and pertinent obligation. He must never forget or wander away from the customs, the manners, the characteristics, the ideals of his subject matter, as to time, place, and personality. Judged in this way, the authenticity of a multitude of stories relating to Abraham Lincoln, for example, becomes a matter of quite minor importance. Romance at its best is a form of art. It takes hold of history and religion in many ways for the purpose of making them more practically useful, interesting and significant. The picturesque and partially romantic story of Paul Revere's ride by Longfellow has sent and is still sending millions of people to Concord and Lexington. It has given an impetus and a charm to the study of the period that no strictly historical narrative of any event in American history has ever approached. And the moral of this little introduction, so far as I am concerned, is simply this—that when a question arises as to what is real and authentic history, and what is traditional or romantic, I am

perfectly willing to take anybody's point of view. In fact, I'll agree with my readers, anyway. You can imagine what a comfortable understanding this is for any writer to start off with. For an illustration of this open-minded and dual point of view, let us begin with the story of the

Squeaking Pew

And in regard to a particular pew of this description in the Old South Meeting House today, I have no information or statistics whatsoever. I can simply say that a gentleman one day walked into this pew and, hearing the noise, he immediately informed me that the squeak was artificial and intentional, that the boards had been deliberately grooved underneath or doctored in some way in order to call attention to the distinguished arrivancy, as Shakespeare would say, of distinguished people.

The Bostonian's Story

Telling this story to an old Bostonian, he remarked: "Why that's nothing. Boston is notorious for its squeaks. I am 75 years old; I have been in Boston for 50 years in the boot and shoe business. I can remember the time when you couldn't sell a shoe in the city of Boston that didn't have a squeak in it."

The Old Lady's Story

Another visitor at the Meeting House some time later had the following to say on the subject:

"I am 87 years old. I can remember sending my petticoat down to the shop to have the squeak put into it. Of course we called it a rustle," she said, "but what do you take us for? Do you think we made noises for nothing in those days? We did not. We did it to attract attention the same as you do today. And the same idea applies about going to church," she added. "In fact, what's the use of going to church if nobody knows it?"

The Englishman's Story

An Englishman walked into this particular pew and, hearing the noise, he exclaimed: "Why, everything round here seems to be imported! You have even imported that squeak. I come from Huddersfield in Yorkshire," he added, "and in the little church where I worship today Lord So and So has the squeaking privilege. He comes to church, enters his pew, makes a little noise, and well,—there's his Lordship!"

The Rhode Island Story

"I am president of the Rhode Island Historical Society. Some time ago I sent an old lounge to the shop for repairs. It was a noisy old thing, at least 200 years old. They sent it back noisier than ever. I said to the workman: 'Why don't you stop that racket?' He replied, 'You don't want to touch those squeaks, Sir, they are worth hundreds of dollars. Why, Sir, the folks in the early days expected to get some kind of response when they asked you to sit down on a handsome piece of furniture like that, didn't they?' "

The Connecticut Story

"You ought to come down to our little town in Connecticut," was the comment of another visitor. "We have a lovely little church in the vestibule of which there are all sorts of old-time curiosities, such, for example, as a very ancient pair of slippers. No mistake about it; these were squeakers. And, by the way, the whole town in the very early days was owned by one big man—they called him the Nabob. Services on Sunday never commenced until members of this family had taken their seats. Well, the old gentleman on his arrival invariably went into the vestibule, took off his cowhide boots, put on the slippers and marched down the centre of the church—squeak, squeak, squeak. And then, of course," our visitor continued, "when the old man sat down, the world went on again."

The Squeaking Cradle

Here and there in New England today one may come across old-time cradles that are still suspiciously squeaky. Indeed, the louder the cradles squeaked, the better the parents are said to have liked them. This kind of music, we are told, put the children to sleep. In Peter Cooper's autobiography we may read something like this: "I have been very much pleased with inventions I put on the market when I was a young man, notably a squeaky or musical device and other conveniences for cradles."

The Rocking-Chair

You dear old lady of the eighties and the seventies and beyond, I take off my hat to you and keep it off!

There you sit by the window, preferably in the twilight, watching, pathetically perhaps, the deepening shadows on the hillside; gently rocking yourself to and fro, to and fro, nursing and rehearsing your precious memories, the faces and voices of dear ones, and from first to last with the rhythm of the rocker in your limbs and the music of your dreams in your soul. You dear old-fashioned lady, you understand me, you know what I am writing about. God bless you and your time-honored inspirational rocking-chair!

Pew Values

Once more, the old-time church pew—for centuries in fact, and here and there today—was, and is, a piece of personal real estate of great interest and social significance, not only to the owner but to the community at large. It—the pew—was also of considerable financial value; say, from one hundred to three or four thousand dollars in some of the churches. I have in my possession a facsimile bill of sale of a pew in the Old South Meeting House in the year 1832. It reads in part as follows:

“I Peggy Spurr of Milton in the County of Norfolk, widow, in consideration of 208 dollars to me paid by Joshua H. Williams of said Milton, yeoman, the receipt of which is hereby acknowledged, do hereby give, grant, assign, transfer, and convey unto the said Joshua H. Williams a certain pew in the Meeting House commonly called the Old South Church . . .

to have and to hold said pew as his and their (heirs and assigns) property forever," and so forth.

Admiral Sims

Not so very long ago, pew values and their importance were amusingly illustrated by Admiral Sims of the United States Navy. As the story runs, the Admiral took a seat in an unoccupied pew in one of the old churches in Schenectady, N.Y. Pretty soon the owner of the pew came along and, seeing the trespasser seated on his property, he allowed himself to get wrathful on the subject. So, without delay, he took his card, wrote the following message on it, and passed it along to the Admiral: "Sir, I pay \$3,000 a year for this pew." The Admiral returned the compliment on *his* card, with the counter as follows: "Sir, you paid a *dam* sight too much for it." Now whether Admiral Sims really meant to swear on this occasion or not is an open question, for I read in a very old dictionary that *dam* originally was simply a term of endearment among sailors!

Very well, then, what shall we call these stories of noisy pews, noisy shoes, noisy petticoats, noisy cradles, noisy rockers, noisy quill pens, noisy furniture, and—they do say it of the early days—high-pitched and noisy New England voices? Is all this noisy evidence history or romance? I should worry! You may call to mind the old-chestnut story of the Boston man who received a telegram from his folks in California that his mother-in-law had passed away, in a comfortable frame of mind, with the added inquiry as to what should be

done with the remains—ordinary burial or cremation. The reply, we are told, was promptly telegraphed. “*Both*, take no chances!” Applying this verdict to the history and romance in the story of the New England Squeak, you get my point of view of this interesting and romantic situation. At any rate, these are pretty good stories to shake at those who may question its historical accuracy.

CHAPTER II

Dear Old Boston and Other Oddities

From the popular point of view, a big question mark is still attached to some of the most interesting situations in the history of Massachusetts. Take the Washington Elm in Cambridge, for example. Did Washington standing under a tree take formal command of the American Army, with the troops on the parade ground near by drenched to the skin, the ceremony taking place amid applause from people leaning out of the windows of houses that were not there? I don't know. Again, were the so-called Paul Revere lanterns displayed from the tower or steeple of Christ Church at the North End, or from a much more likely and convenient church in the same neighborhood? Many say yes, a few say no. Anyway, there is room for a little discussion on the subject. Once more, did Joseph Warren, the hero of Bunker Hill, climb up a ladder from the outside of the Old South Meeting House and into the pulpit to deliver his famous oration on the Boston Massacre? I am sure I don't know. Outside the picturesque imaginations of romancers like myself, to whom I think the public should be very grateful for the relief of historical monotony, there is probably not a particle of evidence to be found in the records. And, by the way, was Benjamin Franklin

born on Milk Street, where his bust is shown on the wall of the Transcript Building? Well, his father said he was, and Ben said he wasn't! What shall we say in a case like this? The following is copied from an old-time guidebook: "Just around the corner on Milk Street we pause for a moment to look at a bust of Franklin on the cornice of a building near by. This is in deference to a tradition that this was the site of Franklin's birthplace, but the location of the real birthplace has never been definitely established." And yet William Pierce, who in 1789 had a barber shop on the corner of what is now Marshall and Hanover Streets, where the Boston Stone is located, followed his calling until he was nearly one hundred years old. He stated that when he shaved Benjamin Franklin, his distinguished customer told him that he was born in the house on the corner of Hanover and Union Streets that afterwards became the Blue Ball Tavern.

However, the stories and traditions about Ben Franklin and his times are much more interesting than the doubts. Take the Franklin house on Milk Street, for an example. It was called the "Blue Ball." This famous mansion was destroyed by fire in the year 1810. But going back to the year 1758, we are told that burglars got into the building and created no end of trouble on Christmas Day, so much so that the Town Fathers were annoyed about it. It was claimed that Boston people in those days did nothing on Christmas Day but go up on the Common to get tipsy. So they looked up an old-time law on the subject to see what could be done about

it. This old Blue Law reads or read substantially as follows: "On account of frequent burglaries on Christmas Day which is a superstitious festival introduced from the Old Country, it is hereby enacted that for the future any Bostonian caught celebrating Christmas in any way will be fined five shillings for each and every offense."

At any rate, this was the house in which Franklin is supposed to have been born. He was baptized, so they say, four or five hours later in the Old Cedar Meeting House across the way. It was a cold day in January, and when somebody complained to Benjamin's father about the cruelty connected with the ceremony, the latter replied, "It is better to be cold in this world than hot in the next!" So far as religion is concerned, however, Benjamin and his father were oceans apart. When the family moved down to Union Street, the head of the household, we are told, put up a barrel of beef for the winter supply. When Ben saw it, he exclaimed, "Don't you think it would be a good idea to say grace once for all on that barrel instead of every time you put a piece of beef on the table?"

Benjamin Franklin Was Born

Some time ago, a lady from Philadelphia, looking up at the bust on the wall of the Transcript Building, soliloquized in this way: "What? Benjamin Franklin born in Boston? Just think of it! Of course I knew he was *born*, but I wasn't quite sure of the place!" Exactly, the lady emphasizes the situation, the important fact, correctly. Franklin was born, and in course of

time said to all the world: "Keep your shop and your shop will keep you!" "Do you want to know the value of money? Try and borrow some." "Three good friends—stick to them: an old wife, an old dog and ready money!" And what did he say to the ladies? You haven't noticed it in the stores lately, have you?—"Many are ruined by buying bargains."

Putting Out the Moon

Did the Boston Firemen—round 1800, I think it was—put out the moon? Well, they certainly tried to. They imported an engine from England. It squirted water nearly 30 feet. No wonder they got excited. A general alarm one foggy afternoon rushed the engine down to the waterfront. Sure enough, there was the fire, a sort of dim rosy glare in the fog. The Firemen thought it was a ship on fire. So they let her have it! Somebody shouted, "That's the moon you are putting out!" Well, so it was. And the story from beginning to end is given away in Shurtleff's well-known history.

Bathtubs Prohibited

Another burning question! Were bathtubs prohibited in Boston in 1845? I don't know. But note what the world has to say about it! Until 1848 the supply of drinking water in Boston was very low. Indeed, the liquid was for sale in some sections at so much a pail or a barrel. Consequently, a bathtub full of the precious fluid was nothing less than an insult to a thirsty community. So, necessity being the mother of ingenious ideas, the doctors got busy, put a dozen polliwogs into clean water, and they all died. Then they put another dozen into dirty water, in which they simply enjoyed

themselves. So, naturally, the dictum of the doctors on the subject was quickly passed around and assimilated by the people, that dirt was good for their hides. The following additional information is from a trade journal published in Hartford, Connecticut.

TIMES DO CHANGE

The first bathtub in the United States is said to have been installed in Cincinnati, December 20, 1842, by Adam Thompson. It was made of mahogany and lined with sheet lead. At a Christmas party he exhibited and explained it, and four guests later took a plunge. The next day the Cincinnati papers devoted many columns to the new invention, and it gave rise to violent controversy, according to a writer of the Detroit Free Press. Some papers designated it as an epicurean luxury, others called it undemocratic, as it lacked simplicity in its surroundings. Medical authorities attacked it as dangerous to health. During the same year the Legislature of Virginia laid a tax of \$30 a year on all bathtubs that might be set up. Pennsylvania did the same. Boston, in 1845, made bathing unlawful except on medical advice, but the ordinance was never enforced and in 1862 it was repealed.

Bench & Board,

Published by PRATT & WHITNEY,
Hartford, Conn.

And besides, Dolly Madison, we are told, introduced bathtubs into the White House in Washington. That was all right. But along came Andrew Jackson, and he is credited with the exclamation, "What are these things?" They told him. "Well," he said, "take 'em right out, they are an insult to the common people."

Beating Your Husband

Once more, was it customary in the 17th century to tie women to stakes on Boston Common for whipping their husbands, and did they really beat them good and hard? Of course they did! Who had a better right? The fact is there were giants among the women in those days—I mean huskies—and they needed the exercise. That is all there was to it.

The Sacred Codfish

And now for another important question. How about the sacred Codfish in the State House on Beacon Hill as an emblem of the Commonwealth and a picturesque reminder of legislative proceedings in the very early days? A great many people believe that a pig, specifically Mrs. Sherman's pig, has a prior and more reasonable claim. In the beginning, as the historical narrative has it, the government of the Colony consisted of Assistants and Deputies, the former being appointed by the King, the latter by popular election. To begin with, they all sat in one chamber and everybody apparently was happy. But in course of time a certain poor widow, Mrs. Sherman by name, lost a pig, and in some way it got into the "pound," the keeper of which at the time

was Captain Keayne, a man of high degree and very wealthy. The pig managed to vanish from the pound in a mysterious way, whereupon Mrs. Sherman sued the Captain for its cash value or for stealing her pig, and lost her case. Whereupon the Captain turned round and sued the widow to the tune of £3 for defamation of character, and collected. Meanwhile a political rumpus was started in the Legislative Assembly—the King's appointees, the Assistants, taking sides with the Captain, and the popular Deputies with the widow, and they forthwith refused to sit together any longer in one chamber. So they divided into two chambers, now the Senate and House of Representatives, and "Mother Sherman's pig did it," and Governor Winthrop said so. John Fiske, in "The Beginnings of New England," has the following to say on the subject:

"At first the deputies sat in the same chamber with the Assistants, but at length in 1644 they were formed into a second Chamber with increased powers and the way this important constitutional change was brought about is worth remembering. As Winthrop puts it 'there fell out a great business upon a very small occasion.'"

The small occasion, of course, being the pig in the pound.

Margaret Jones, Martyr

This combination of history and romance in the early days in New England makes delightful reading at

a safe distance! It was on Boston Common that Margaret Jones, the first woman doctor in America, paid the extreme penalty of the law for being wiser and more humane than her fellows. On the street, one day, "a little child was seen to run from Margaret and when followed by an officer it vanished." This sealed Margaret's fate. Her husband, Thomas, attempted to escape on a vessel to the West Indies, but "the ship being in light ballast and having on board 80 horses, fell a rolling." An officer was sent for, and when he came, some one said to him: "You can tame men. Can't you tame the ship?" Said the officer, drawing a warrant, "I have here what will tame her!" And forthwith he arrested Mr. Jones. "At that instant," in the words of the old police report, "the ship began to stop rolling and when Jones was put in prison it moved no more."

Stimulating Church Attendance

Pardon me for throwing in just one more story about our world-famous philosopher. Some people, I am aware, will call it a dreadful story; but never mind! Anyway, it will be news to most people, perhaps, that Franklin while in Pennsylvania had an interesting military record. In fact he was a full-fledged Colonel. His command consisted of 600 men. Franklin and his men were instrumental in building three forts. Franklin's job at the time was to keep the Indians back in the woods where they belonged. Hence the forts. The forts being completed, the men, it seems, had little to

do but to hang around and amuse themselves, and church services in those days not being very amusing—believe it or not—were shamefully neglected by Franklin's warriors. Whereupon, and very naturally, the minister came into the picture with a protest and called upon the Colonel to provide some kind of practical remedy. Franklin, we are told, took a day or so to think the matter over, and then made reply to the minister very much as follows: "Your complaint Sir is well founded and I have in my mind an easy and very practical remedy. You see Governor Morris has furnished me with ten barrels of whiskey as a first installment to be doled out to the men a gill at a time before breakfast. My proposition is for the men to get their gills after your services instead of before breakfast. This plan, I am sure, will take care of the attendance."

Other Oddities

Oddities in New England in the early days? Why, certainly, but they were not ridiculous unless the world at large is to be banned in the same way. In fact, nearly everything that is two or three hundred years old is more or less funny. We of the present day will be just as funny as the ancients, and in much less time than a couple of centuries. In the seventeenth century, for example, drunkards were firmly secured in barrels and permitted to roll around on the Common to their heart's content. Plenty of bedding was supplied to the night policeman on duty in a little double-decked police station located just about where the Soldiers and Sailors Monument on the Common is

today. Meantime the Chief of Police and others in the old town were occasionally fined for smoking on what is now Tremont Street. And again, if you wished to get rid of your dog in those days, all you had to do was to cut off his head and sell the bust to the Town Fathers in return for a liberal bounty. The scalps of unfortunate Indians were commercialized in exactly the same way. And what about Scotchmen? At one time a shipload of brawny Highlanders were sold into bondage on Boston Common not because they couldn't but because they wouldn't pay for their passage! And finally, breaking it as gently as possible to my readers, just what the seventeenth-century Johnny Bull did to the Irish along the same lines would simply be cruelty to release for publication just at present!

July 4, 1785

It was said that "vast multitudes this day declared themselves *independent*. The Mall on the Common is filled with temporary dram shops and cake and ale and punch undergo a rapid annihilation. The whole rag-tag and bob-tail gentry, from the birds of Paradise to Barefoot Molly, are in their glory and meet on a common level. Independence is the word and the sequel will show many independent of common sense. Meantime all idle persons who do not properly do their stint shall be moderately whipped." (From police records.)

An Old-Time Procession

"Peace Offering to Liberty and Equality

Citizens, eight deep.

Eight hundred loaves of bread drawn by six horses

A hogshead of Punch drawn by six horses

A second hogshead of Punch drawn by six horses

Which closed the Procession.

The procession moved from the foot of Middle Street through various streets to the Common, and from thence to State Street, by which time the punch had disappeared, and there an ox was carved and disposed of with much good will." Another account says: "When the procession arrived at State Street the punch had done its work; but few could get a slice of the ox and he who did, used it to smear his neighbor's face and the scene that followed beggared description."

Our calamity orators today should inwardly digest a few of these interesting occasions. Personally, and comparatively speaking, I think the temperance movement in Boston and elsewhere in the twentieth century is getting along pretty nicely, I thank you.

The President's Laundry

Any odd situations in the twentieth century? Certainly, one or two, and then some. At the time yours truly was one of the pioneers of the "Safety First" campaign on American railroads, he received the following personal letter from the President of the United States:

March 21, 1908.

THE WHITE HOUSE,
WASHINGTON.

Personal

My dear Mr. Fagan:

I am greatly interested in your recent articles in the *Atlantic Monthly*. Can you get down here to see me Wednesday morning next?

Sincerely yours,

(Signed) THEODORE ROOSEVELT.

Certainly. A few days later we, the President and I, were seated in the official sanctum of the White House, a sort of adjunct of the Cabinet Room, chatting pleasantly about things in general and the railroads in particular, while just outside one of the windows, fluttering in the breeze (shades of Downing Street and Buckingham Palace), was the *family washing*! Or, if you prefer it, the presidential laundry! I wish I had taken down a categorical list of the pieces hanging out there on the presidential clothesline, for the reason that the laundry and the wardrobe of the nations from generation to generation are interesting side lights in human history and should be faithfully described in the same chapter, as it were, as the voyage of the "Mayflower."

To end the discussion on oddities, as a newspaper editor would say, take a very early illustration: A good housewife in the year 1760 advertised as follows:

Lost Articles.

A velvet jacinth

A pair close Briches

A dark Alpine Peticote

Seven Sheetes

Baby Linings

One doz Dipers

Half Doz Chiny Tea-cups and Sarsers.

Boston Errus excepted, lawful munny value
£7.16-8.

In a word, then, New England, and Boston in particular, began on the ground like the rest of the world and not up in the air in a distinctive sort of an atmosphere, the "High Lights" of dear old Boston to the contrary notwithstanding.

CHAPTER III

What's in a Name

In a continued survey of New England activities from mixed romantic and historical points of view, it will not be necessary to go very far afield. For example, let us take a stroll down State Street in the City of Boston. On the right-hand side of the street going down, and up over the doorway of No. 25, the Brazer Building, if your eyes are fairly good, you may read the following inscription:

SITE OF THE FIRST MEETING HOUSE IN BOSTON BUILT IN
1632

PREACHERS: JOHN WILSON, JOHN ELIOT, JOHN COTTON
USED BEFORE 1640 FOR TOWN MEETINGS AND FOR
SESSIONS OF THE GENERAL COURT OF THE COLONY.

Take particular notice of the three *Johns*, if you please. "What's in a name?" Well, in the early history of New England, a name sometimes—yes, nearly always—meant a great deal. Take *John*, for example. In fact, if we were to take *John* out of the story of the Puritans and of the American Revolution, we should find ourselves distressingly short of patriotic and religious material. Apart from the three Johns on the tablet of the First Church on the Brazer Building, we may call to mind John Smith, John Cabot, John Robinson, John Eliot, John Leverett, John Alden, John

Endicott, John Winthrop, John Harvard, John Davenport, John Adams, John Hancock, John Knox, and many others down the line of history if we choose to follow it, to John Wesley, John Bunyan, John Milton, and John the Baptist crying in the wilderness. Is it possible to discover in the history of any country a situation in regard to a single name so illuminative of the struggles and problems of the times? I very much doubt it. Such a multiplicity of Johns in the history of New England, at any rate, was not a mere coincidence. It was a dedication, a consecration. Indeed, looking over the ground, even casually, one easily comes to the conclusion that in those early days in New England, when parents desired to consecrate a boy to a career of civic usefulness or high religious endeavor, the all-important preliminary was to christen him *John*—"John" meaning "the precious gift of God"! Surely that is a reasonable explanation of it all. And I may also call to mind that had it not been for the piety and generosity of John Norton and his widow, there never would have been any such building today as the Old South Meeting House.

In talking about New England names, however, it will never do to forget the children and the streets. They strictly conform to the mental attitude of the people and to the outstanding interests and problems of the day. In the Puritan period the outstanding interest was religion; so we have Prudence, Patience, Charity, Mercy, Matthew, Mark, Luke, John and so forth, while in the Revolutionary period the names of

the children are predominantly military, such as the following:

Names of the Children

“We are great-great-grandchildren of George Washington Appleton, who was one of triplets baptized in the Old South Meeting House in the year 1788 and the names of the triplets were George Washington Appleton, John Knox Appleton and Joseph Warren Appleton.

“Pauline Putnam, Marietta, Ohio, straight down the line from General Putnam.”

As it seems to me, the present age has no single outstanding characteristic, and so children today are being named after a sort of indiscriminate sentiment and excitement; so we have our Deweys, our Teddys, Grovers, Lindys and Birdys.

And so it goes North, South, East and West.

“The Mississippi flood did not curtail the activity of the stork and negro families in Red Cross camps now boast of such new arrivals as Overflow Johnson, Highwater Jackson, Refugee Jones and Muddy Moses.”

Some time ago, speaking to a clergyman from the Middle West about children and their names, he informed me that he had recently been called upon to christen the child of a very estimable couple. There seemed to be considerable hesitation on the part of the parents, however, in regard to the name to be. Finally, with marked emotion, the father of the child

explained the delicate situation in this way: "You must understand Sir," he said, "we already have four children, all we can afford to have, Sir. In other words, it's time to stop. Therefore, as an ever-present and perpetual reminder of the fact, we are going to call this child *Plenty*."

I have been informed that in the Middle West today you will find more direct evidence of the survival of Puritan characteristics than you will in the East. Be this as it may, I think this story is a pretty good illustration of the Puritan method in dealing with the problem of "birth control."

Streets and Highways

As with the names of the children in the early history of New England, so was it with the streets: practically every street and alleyway in the old town of Boston was named after its business or other characteristic. Can anything be more significant or picturesque than Pudding Lane, Pie Alley, Frog Lane, Lovers' Lane, Paddy's Alley, Brimstone Corner (hot sermons), Beer Lane, Crab Alley and Loafers' Lane (near the old-time "Steal Works")?

Damnation Alley

And then off State Street we find Damnation Alley. As the story comes down to us, it seems that teamsters in the early days, meeting on this street and not being able to get by, said things to each other as they do today, for that matter, and this swearing gave the name to the street. The Town Fathers, we are told,

got angry about it after a while and issued an order something like this: "Teamsters when they meet on these narrow streets must behave like good citizens, jump right down and flip a coin to see who is to back out!" Such, it is said, was the first order issued on this continent for the regulation of street traffic. At any rate, that is the where and the how of the beginning of street traffic. Well, see what we have today! Comparisons are instructive. Look back and see where we came from is pretty good all-round advice. If more of us today were in the habit of doing so, perhaps we would be better satisfied with the situation as it is and as it is likely to be in the future.

CHAPTER IV

The Glories of State Street

Now let us cross the street from the Brazer Building and for a minute or two consider the old State House and its present-day equipment.

When visitors enter a public or semi-public institution, they dearly love to be welcomed in some way. A smile, a word, a "good morning" go a long way. A little attention of this kind constitutes an atmosphere. Of course, in the Old State House, for example, the attendants cannot shake hands with everybody, but almost every visitor to this historic building, I am sure, is made to feel perfectly at home when, on entering, he is confronted with the following prominently displayed poster:

Hail, Guest, we ask not what thou art:
If friend, we greet thee hand and heart,
If stranger, such no longer be.
If foe, our love shall conquer thee.

As we all know, the Old State House is one of the outstanding places in the city both as regards its history and its surroundings. In a word, it passes the test of supreme interest to the people at large—*summa cum laude*, as they say in the colleges. And why? Simply and to the point, because here, in the words of Sam Adams, "Independence was born."

THE GLORIES OF STATE STREET

To begin with the whipping post, the cage for Sabbath Breakers, the stocks and pillory, and other so called "Conveniences" were located in the Market Place and its vicinity while from the Town House itself radiated the various departments and functions of civic management.

(Change Ave.)
Damnation Alley

AMERICAN
TRUST CO.

(Exchange St.)
Shrimpton's Lane

THE MERCHANTS
NATIONAL BANK
(Devonshire St.)

Crooked Lane

STATE STREET MEMORIES AND CELEBRATIONS

FIRST MEETING HOUSE	1632
OPEN MARKET-STEAD	1632
"MERCHANTS IN FAIR WEATHER MAKE THEIR CHANGE IN THE OPEN STREET AT THE EASTERMOST END OF THE TOWN HOUSE" HENCE - CHANGE ST., EXCHANGE ST. AND CHANGE AVE.	
TOWN HOUSE IN PART LEASED TO MASONIC BODIES	1820 TO 1830
RECEPTION TO GEORGE WASHINGTON	1789

King Street
The Great Street to the Sea
(State St.)

(Kilby St.)

Mackril Lane

"The second period in the history of the Old State House may be said to extend from its rebuilding in 1748 to the time when it was abandoned by State Officials who, on January 11, 1798, marched in picturesque procession from its closing portals to Beacon Hill where they took formal possession of the new State House which had been erected on its summit."

STATE STREET
TRUST CO.

(Congress St.)

Quaker

QUAKER MEETING
(FRIENDS)

Lane

1632 FIRST MEETING HOUSE

PREACHERS

John Wilson-John Eliot-John Cotton
Used before 1640 for Town Meetings
and for Sessions of the General Court.

(Devonshire St.)

Pudding Lane

STATE STREET MEMORIES AND CELEBRATIONS

FIRST TOWN HOUSE	1657
TOWN LIBRARY	1683 TO 1711
EXAMINATION OF CAPT. KIDD	1699
GOV. ANDROS OVERTHROWN	1689
CAPTURE OF LOUISBURG	1746
IMPRESSMENT OF SAILORS	1747
WRITS OF ASSISTANCE	1761
REPEAL OF STAMP TAX	1766
BOSTON MASSACRE	1770
DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE	1776
PEACE WITH ENGLAND	1783



HERE INDEPENDENCE WAS BORN

OLD STATE HOUSE

Cornhill

(Washington St.)

Fore Street to Roxbury

Just a few words about some of the exhibits in the Old State House today. What a delightful story of old customs, street signs, house signs, old bells, old fishing tackle, whalers and clipper ships, precious emblems and still more precious documents of the greatest historical interest is hidden away, so to speak, in these famous exhibits. From tragedy to comedy, from the historically sublime to the quaintly curious. What a delightful way this is, or would be, to conjure up the historic memories of old New England for educational purposes, if one could only persuade our up-to-date historians to put a little more life, a little more color, into some of their prosy contributions. The possession of a keen sense of humor is a passport to the realm of successful business transactions and happy homes. In human affairs, in general, humor is continually on the watch for the silver lining. A pleasant disposition fits in almost everywhere and has a tendency to keep individuals and nations on a peace-loving basis. Whether we like it or not, the picturesque and the humorous must now be added to our religious, our social, and our educational understanding.

What, for example, would the mind of a Shakespeare have to say about the Old Court House bell on display at one of the windows in the Old State House? What celebrations, what public rejoicing, what patriotic demonstrations, what tragedies, what strange legal proceedings, what still stranger-looking judges and court officials! Why, that old bell and the still older Prison Laws and the original court room would be

made to tinkle and tingle with human interest. Dogberry in the Old Court House? Well, I guess! Here, for example, is the captain of a ship kissing his wife in public, for which he was fined ten shillings. "All aboard for Merry England," says the chronicler, "where we can not only kiss our own wives, but occasionally the other fellow's, without danger of penalty." Justice in the old Court Room? Well, here is a poor fellow *suspected* of setting a fire. Sentence—stand in the pillory, give five hundred pounds bonds with sureties, and to have both ears cut off—for identification purposes, we may infer—in case of another fire!

For another example—Margaret Brewster went into the Old South and pronounced her curse. She had her face blackened and wore sackcloth. Margaret was hurried off to jail and brought to court next day. She had been washed and the officer could not identify her; so they gave her a good whipping and let her go.

However, the Old State House was the original seat of the town government, the place from which radiated the inspiration and the service of the different departments, such as the firemen and police. The Town Watch in those days, for example, as its story is given to us in the old records, must have been a very peculiar institution. From all accounts, it was an exact counterpart of the famous Town Watch so quaintly described for us by Shakespeare in "Much Ado About Nothing," with Dogberry as the principal "nothing."

This is Dogberry's charge to the Town Watch in Messina:

Dogberry:

You shall also make no noise in the streets; for the watch to babble and to talk is most tolerable, and not to be endured.

Second Watchman:

We will rather sleep than talk; we know what belongs to a watch.

Now compare Shakespeare's Old World story with the police reports of the Dogberry period in Massachusetts. The police department had a pronounced sense of humor in these days.

"1819—A committee of the Selectmen made several visits to the Watch houses in the night time and reported as follows:

Jan. 20—One o'clock night, South Watch doing good duty but the two constables are asleep. At North Watch constables are awake.

Feby. 3—Another visit made by the Inspector of Police. He said, 'at one o'clock visited South Watch: constable asleep. One and one half o'clock at Center Watch found constable and doorman asleep and a drunken man kicking at the door to get in.'

The Inspector recommends that the doorman be requested to wake the constable when necessary!

Meantime, several burglaries having been committed it is announced and recorded that

‘It is now time to overhaul these watchmen: they have been asleep since New Years. The Captains are generally men in their prime, aged from 90 to 100 years and the crew only average about fourscore, and so we have the advantage of their age and experience, at least the robbers do.’ ”

These old-time stories are interesting as well as instructive. From very rude beginnings all manner of elaborate systems have been worked out. Take streets without lamps, for example. We gather from an old police report that once upon a time snakes, bears, Indians, and thieves in general were much to be dreaded in Boston in the night-time. So a law was made calling upon pedestrians and others to carry a lantern after dark. One of the first offenders was a colored man, named “ ’Rastus.”

’Rastus appeared in court and said to the judge: “Your Honor, you got nothing on me. Here is the lantern.” There was no candle in it. So the law was changed to read, “a lantern with a candle in it.”

Again ’Rastus was arrested, and again he said to the judge: “Your Honor, you got nothing on me. Here’s the lantern and here’s the candle.” This time the judge is reported to have addressed ’Rastus somewhat as follows:

“Look here, ’Rastus, we propose to make this law read, ‘a lantern with a lighted candle in it.’ Shall we hear from you again?” “Oh, no, no!” replied ’Rastus. “Your Honor’s throwing too much light on the subject.”

I sincerely hope that Bostonians and others will strike up a larger acquaintance with the Old State House and its most interesting museum.

For a final illustration, take the last cocked hat worn in Boston in the year 1832. Well, Major Thomas Melville wore this hat, and a fine portrait of the old gentleman as well as the identical hat are on exhibition in the Old State House today. And it was to this portrait and to this hat that Oliver Wendell Holmes in those dear old literary days addressed the following delightful soliloquy:

I know it is a sin
For me to sit and grin
At him here;
But the old three-cornered hat
And the breeches and all that
Are so queer!

Boston is particularly rich in these indoor and outdoor memories. A visitor to New England in 1698 said of Boston: "The buildings, like their women, are neat and handsome; and their streets, like the hearts of their men, are paved with pebbles"—in other words, cobblestones. In Congress Place, an alleyway off Congress Street today, you will find a patch of these original cobblestones. Without any reference to the men of 1698, these pebbles are certainly a rough-looking bunch.

Battles, generals, constitutions, federations, charters and dates are all very good material for student study and historical research. Of course, these large events and constitutional happenings have a well-deserved

place of honor in the memories of Americans. But the general run of the people today is becoming more and more interested in the wonderful human story of the folks on the ground, so to speak, who lived and struggled and suffered through the long, long years in the past in order that we in the twentieth century might live, comparatively speaking, in a paradise of security and comfort. And, by the way, the Old South Meeting House and the Old State House in Boston today are splendid places in which to wander around and to catch the quaint yet vigorous spirit of the Puritans at worship, at work, and occasionally at play. Surely it is fundamentally interesting and profitable to get acquainted with the customs, the manners, the domestic habits and the handicraft of these Forefathers and Foremothers of the nation. It is surprising to note with what intense interest people today regard such commonplace articles as old-time kitchen utensils, old bonnets, candle moulds, and snuffers, old umbrellas, foot warmers and other treasures of a personal and domestic character. In hamlet and palace today, all over the country, these commonplace reminders of the everyday life of the people are the real heirlooms and treasure looms of the American people. Hence the universal popularity of the "antique" in all its various forms and phases.

Rufus Choate of distinguished memory, in a remarkable address delivered in Salem in the year 1833, insisted on the importance of illustrating and perpetuating the story of New England by a series of romances

like the Waverley Novels. One use for such romances, he said, would be to supply the deficiencies of history. How little do the formal histories either today or in the past have to say about the occupations of the people, their arts, their customs, their joys and sorrows, their quaint God-fearing behavior, according to their lights, on the streets and in the homes!

"The people have more wisdom than their government," says Calvin Coolidge. And again: "These great impulses of national feeling manifested by the general run of the people, their ideals, their manners and their customs and not the policy of statesmen or the manœuvres of politicians," we are told by a famous historian, "form the groundwork and basis of the history of nations." The English historian to whom I refer was John Green—*John*, of course—and his American counterpart, both in ideas and celebrity, was John Fiske.

Briefly, then, and to the point, the genius of New England from generation to generation is not to be measured simply in terms of politics or war-time achievements. On the whole, New England takes her cue and her character from the nature of the blood that has trickled and is trickling in her veins.

CHAPTER V

Isaak Johnson's Garden

At the time the present King's Chapel was being built, there seems to have been some doubt as to whether the Quincy quarry could be depended upon to supply the necessary quantity of granite, and I understand a sort of proviso to cover the danger was entered in the builder's contract. Tradition also has it that while the building was being erected, the congregation continued to worship in the old wooden chapel until the present granite structure round and over it was completed. Not so very many years ago two roofs, one on top of the other, were discovered on the Old South Meeting House. The explanation ran something like this. A report was brought in by somebody that the Meeting House was leaking. "Let her leak," was the response. "Put on another roof."

Again, while workmen were demolishing the old Boston Theatre in the year 1926—I think it was—an old building was uncovered beneath the grand staircase. It was completely enveloped by the original theatre erected in 1845. The old building itself was presumably 150 years old.

These adventures in old-time building construction remind us of the story that at one time a religious society in a country village desired to build a new meeting house, the old one having become dilapidated. After

mature deliberation, the society, at a meeting called for the purpose, adopted the following resolutions:

“First: *Resolved*, That we build a new house.

Second: *Resolved*, That we will build the new house on the site of the old one.

Third: *Resolved*, That we will use the material of the old house in building the new one.

Fourth: *Resolved*, That we will occupy the old house till the new one is completed.”

Of course, some of these old customs may seem to be meaningless and funny to the present generation. Nevertheless, queer as they may seem to us, there are all sorts of good reasons attached to them. For example, just as soon as early arrivals in this country began to settle down somewhat and to do some thinking for themselves, the old-country idea of primogeniture—that is to say, the right of the first-born to inherit the family property in bulk—very quickly passed into the discard; and so houses and other property were curiously subdivided by will among members of a family—a bedroom and rights in the kitchen to Mother, an attic and part of the barn to a son, bedrooms and certain facilities to the daughters, and the right of way to and from the barn and the back houses for everybody. Horses and cows were subdivided among the heirs in the same way—the cow to one member of the family, the unborn calf to another. However, let us now have a word or two about King’s Chapel cemetery.

The original King's Chapel building was not erected until 1689, but the cemetery goes back to 1630, and was generally known until the Chapel was built as the Johnson Cemetery, and for very good reasons. Here is the burial place of Mary Chilton, Governor Winthrop, Lady Andros, Rev. John Cotton, John Davenport (the founder of New Haven, Conn.), and of other prominent persons of the Colonial period.

We all know the cemetery (1630) as it is today; but its origin, not so well known, is perhaps the most interesting section of its history.

In the company of Governor Winthrop on his arrival in Boston was a man named Johnson—Isaak Johnson. The death of Mr. Johnson, September 3, 1630, was looked upon by Governor Winthrop and his devoted company as a public calamity. His lot or property was comprehended by the present School, Washington, Court and Tremont Streets. When on his deathbed he expressed a wish to be buried in the upper end of this lot, he was accordingly buried there. Before long, however, according to the story, somebody else died, and left word in a will, "Please bury me alongside Brother Johnson." And that was all right. But when applications for the same privilege began to pour in from all sides, the authorities became very much disturbed about it, because the ground was not consecrated; and we may read in the old-time records this dreadful sentence: "Brother Johnson's Garden is getting to be a poor place for vegetables." Consequently, the garden was forthwith converted into the Johnson, now King's Chapel, Cemetery. Fifty odd years went by, when,

according to the story, the Selectmen paid a visit to the cemetery and didn't like the way the tombstones of Brother Johnson's admirers were arranged. They said they were too zigzag; so they pulled up the tablets indiscriminately from all over the cemetery, and arranged them in straight lines just inside the Tremont Street sidewalk and regardless of bodies buried in back.

Years later, this gave Dr. Oliver Wendell Holmes the occasion to remark that he had paid a visit to this cemetery, and that in his opinion the superscription on most of the tombstones, namely, "Here Lies," is absolutely true. A few days ago a visitor took the edge off this story by informing me that in Central New York there are two or three graveyards that today are suffering from the same fancied indignity, but nobody thinks it necessary to go out of his way to blame the Selectmen. With New York State people, it is simply a case of excusable family pride insisting upon the old family names being placed in the front row facing the boulevard instead of out of sight in the backwoods. Nevertheless, even in modern times, very amusing liberties are sometimes taken with the departed, or those about to depart. For instance, when I entered the railroad service in the year 1881, there was no examination or record kept of trainmen on the old Fitchburg Railroad. However, the applicant was always called upon to answer three leading questions, namely:

"How old are you? Where do you live? What shall we do with your remains?"

Well here I am—I mean the *remains*, fifty years later, still above ground and very much at your service.



A TYPICAL NEW ENGLAND YOUNGSTER
A grandson of the author

CHAPTER VI

About Young America

The Old South is particularly interested in young people, and young people are very much interested in the Old South. Once upon a time a group of Jewish girls from the North End of Boston attended a course of lectures in the Meeting House. At the conclusion of one of these lectures, a representative of the group informed the Meeting House authorities that they (the girls) were unable to find a portrait of Abraham Lincoln in the building and they would like to know if the Association would accept one for display in the church as a token of their esteem and gratitude. Consequently, at the southeast corner, today there hangs a very fine portrait of the martyr President bearing the following inscription:

PRESENTED TO THE
OLD SOUTH
BY THE JERUSALEM STARS
OF THE NORTH END UNION
1905

During the summer of 1922 an Italian, unable as yet to express himself distinctly in the English language, brought his little daughter into the Meeting House by the direction, as he informed me, of the child's school-teacher. The man explained to me as best he could that his daughter wanted to get a little inspiration

from the Old South and its early history. And the little girl, prompted by her teacher, no doubt, explained to me in a very simple and childlike way the exact nature of her mission. Above all things, she was interested in the men and the women of the Revolution. She would like to see some of their faces, their portraits—who, for example, is this, and that, and the other old gentleman on the wall yonder in the corner? And her curiosity in regard to one and all of these Old South portraits seemed to be focused into a simple and specific inquiry repeated again and again, “What did *he* do to help his country?”

“Grown Up” Children

This class of Young Americans, “just over,” as it were, have the old-time worshipful spirit. In this respect they are in line with the children of the older and the oldest Colonial families who come into the Old South Meeting House today reverently, sometimes on tiptoe. Young America in the bulk, however, so far as visitors to the Old South are concerned, never tiptoe to anything or anybody. They may be teachable, of course, but the worshipful instinct seems to be lacking. They are clever, self-possessed, and respectful; but alas, the youngest among them is already a “grown-up.” And, strange to say, American parents only too often take no end of pride in their “grown up” children. They do not seem to understand that the shortening of childhood is an outstanding menace to the national life. Is the shortening of childhood, then, an economic necessity, or is it simply the hurry, the greed

and the pride of a reckless civilization? The twentieth century—the eclipse of the home, almost everybody to blame, even the mothers, with a multiplicity of outside interests, giving aid and encouragement to the scattering process—such is the regrettable story. And to think of the raw material of the present generation of Americans—such splendid boys and girls! O Young America!

The mental fertility of some of these little ones today is astonishing.

The First Coolidge

A little boy in his fourth year, on being shown a picture of George Washington, quite casually remarked, "He was the first Coolidge!" Did he recognize the bust of Ben Franklin on the Milk Street Wall? "Well, he is on the stamps." And how about General Warren? Ever heard of him? "Oh, yes, Bunker Hill!"

Paul Revere Without a Horse

"Write your name down on the Visitors' Book," said an old gentleman to his grandson in the Meeting House, "and tell these people what you know about your ancestors." The boy wrote as follows: "My name is Bainbridge Larkin, 8 years old, from Georgetown, Mass. My great-grandfather was Deacon Larkin who *suplide* Paul Revere with a horse to ride to Lexington." Turning to the writer as if he thought his family had been neglected, he added: "Longfellow didn't say a word about the horse. Too bad, wasn't it? Well, what was Paul Revere without the horse, anyway? The horse did all the work, didn't he?"

A Gold Medal Boy

William J. Diekel, Woodhaven, N.Y., eleven years old, "Winner of the Gold Medal for two consecutive years given by the D. A. R. of New York State, for the best essay on the Liberty Bell and Valley Forge, open to all the school children in New York City."

No Use for Girls

A little boy six years old was playing on the floor with his little companions. One of the girls threw a small block of wood at him, hitting him on the head. It didn't hurt him, but he became dreadfully angry with the girls. Later in the evening he asked his mother to spell out for him the word "allowed." Not knowing what was in his little mind, she spelled it out for him as follows, "Aloud." Next morning a notification to all the world was found pinned securely on the outside of the street door, to wit:

NO GIRLS ~~ALLOWED~~
ALOUD IN THIS HOUSE

It is one thing to tell stories, it is of additional interest to show you the *goods*.

The Wishing Stone

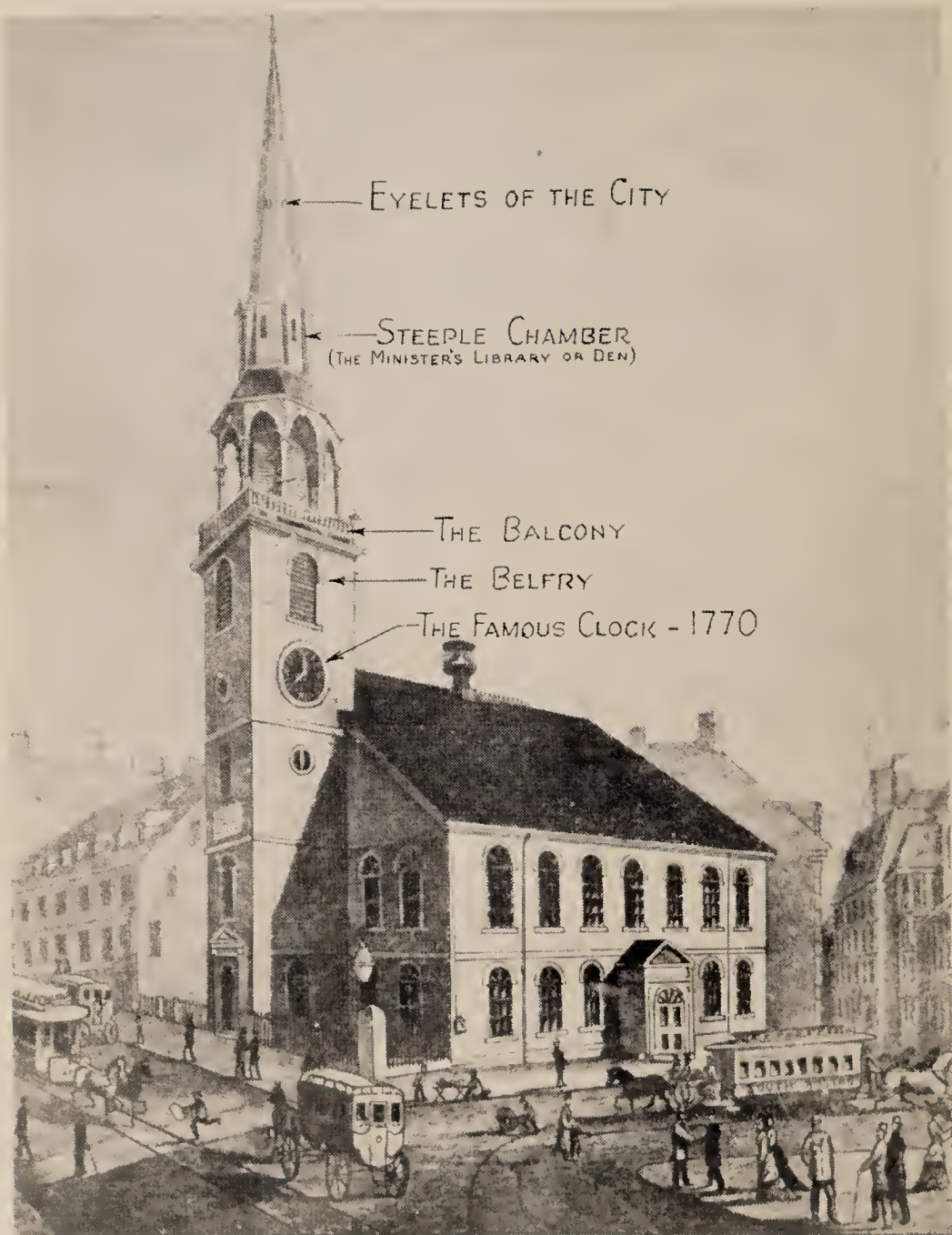
The famous Wishing Stone on Boston Common was situated just about where the path from Joy Street runs to the Great Tree, and was near the Beacon Street Mall. Its name implies the use to which it was formerly put. It has long since disappeared. The young folks of by-gone days used to walk nine times around this stone, and then, standing or sitting upon it, silently make their wishes, which, in their opinion, were sure to come to pass if the mystic rites were properly performed.

Note on Mother Goose

Elizabeth Foster, known in the literature of the nursery as Mother Goose, was born in Charlestown, Mass., in 1665. She married Isaac Goose in 1693. Became a member of Old South Church in 1694. She died in 1757 and was buried in the Old Granary Burial Ground on Tremont Street (at any rate, the Goose family tomb is there). She was of a wealthy Boston family. Her eldest daughter married Thomas Fleet, an enterprising printer doing business on Pudding Lane, now Devonshire Street, Boston. After the death of her husband, Mrs. Goose made her home with this daughter. When their first child was born, Grandmother Goose was much delighted, and spent much of her time in singing songs and ditties of her own composing to please the baby. This became such an annoyance to Mr. Fleet, who loved quiet, that he remonstrated and

scolded, all in vain. As he could not silence the old lady, he resolved to turn the annoyance to some good account; so he gathered up the ditties and nonsensical jingles and published them under the title, "Songs for the Nursery, or Mother Goose's Melodies for the Children."

CLOCK IN FANEUIL HALL
PRESENTED TO THE CITY
BY THE
CHILDREN OF BOSTON
JANUARY 1850



THE OLD SOUTH CHURCH

CHAPTER VII

The Old South Meeting House***A Treasury of Historical
Relics and Reminders***

Continuing our search for material romantic and otherwise, let us return once more to the Old South Meeting House. The building itself is running over with quaint and curious information. For example, the corner stone has the following legend: "N. E. March 31 1729"—N. E. signifying "newly erected." On the northeast corner of the church, cut deep into the granite, is another inscription—"J. B. 1729." These letters are the initials of Joshua Blanchard, the builder of the church, and he was also the builder of Faneuil Hall.

The method of brick-laying in the early days has considerable historical significance. On the Old South we find what was known as the Flemish Bond, the brick being laid lengthwise and endwise alternately, while the English Bond on the Old Corner Book Store and the Old State House called for a continuous layer of "longs," with the same of the "shorts" underneath.

The Clock

OLD SOUTH CLOCK MUSES ON PASSING
SHOW OF 170 YEARS.

Ancient Time Piece in Historic Meeting House
has watched as Spiritual Landmark growth in

century and a half of the "Scarlet" Town into a Great City of Cleaner Social and Political Morality—Beneath its Faithful Gaze Notable Assembly of Patriots Thundered its Welcome to Washington and Still it Ticks, Ticks, on.

. . .

Boston Herald, May 31, 1925

The Steeple Chamber

The Old South tower itself has an interesting history. Before and during the Revolution, the library of Dr. Prince, one of the Old South ministers was, I understand, in the Steeple Chamber of this tower. Among other treasures this library contained Governor Bradford's priceless "History of Plimouth Plantation," certainly one of the most precious manuscripts on the continent. This document, it was feared, had been destroyed by the British soldiers during the siege, but in comparatively recent times it was discovered in the Bishop of London's library in England, and after a while it was happily returned to this country and is now in safe keeping in the Massachusetts State House.

The Tea Party Pulpit

The pulpit in the Old South Meeting House today is sometimes referred to as the "Tea Party Pulpit"; that is to say, the mahogany inset known also as the Wine Glass Pulpit. After the Boston fire in 1872 and the occupation of the church by the Boston post office it, the pulpit, had a somewhat hectic career. It was

thrown out on the sidewalk and lost for a while on the streets, and then finally discovered and lodged for safe keeping in a Dorchester barn (Mr. Huebner's). In the year 1900 it found its way back to its original placement in the Meeting House, right under the sounding board, as we see it today. Regardless of the pulpit and its history, however, it is the spot, so to speak, under the sounding board where the Tea Party and other revolutionary problems were discussed and debated that has such a lasting interest to the world at large. Said a gentleman from London to me one day: "Of course we all know what happened to the tea when it got here; but what have you to say about the people or the firm that sent it over? Why," continued my informant, "they are still doing business on the same location under the sign of the Crown and Three Sugar Loaves, 14 Creechurch Lane, London, England; and this identical business, mind you, dates back to the year 1650." I, the writer, immediately wrote a letter to Davison Newman and Company, the firm referred to, and their reply to me in brief was as follows: "Glad to hear from you. Herewith is a photograph of 'The Crown and Three Sugar Loaves,' where we are still selling tea over the same counter. We shall be very glad to send you another shipment!"

Personality of the Old Meeting House

The notebook of every lover of the Meeting House is particularly rich in memories of its almost tragic adventures. It is a privilege, therefore, to recall and to register in the minds of the present generation its

outstanding personalities and associations—Governor Winthrop, Benjamin Franklin, Mary Norton, Judge Sewell, Joseph Warren, Sam Adams, James Otis, William Dawes, Mary Hemenway; the Impressment of Sailors, the Stamp Tax, the Boston Massacre, the Removal of the Regiments, the Election Sermons, the Tea Party—and finally, but not least in importance, the proposed destruction of the building in 1876 and the heroic campaign that followed for its preservation. These personalities, these famous incidents are the real thrills of the Old Meeting House. Bostonians, after two hundred years, what kind of thrill has this old-time “Sanctuary of Freedom” for you? So much for the building itself. The interior is equally interesting.

Gems in Historic Museum

In the collection of historical relics to be found in the Old South Meeting House today there are many curious documents and other reminders of the daily life of the people.

Official Passport

“BOSTON, Aug y 13, 1776

These certify that Ebenezer Stimpson has been so smoked and cleansed that in our opinion he may now be permitted to pass into the country, without Danger of Communicating the Small Pox to anyone

JOHN SCOLLAY

NATHANIEL APPLETON

Selectman of Boston.”

Picnics—Bill of Fare

1776

1876

YE

OLDE TYME

PARTIE

in

Ye Brick Painted Baptist

Meeting House

In Ye Olde Town of Charlestown

“Biled Indian Pudding,” “Biled Pot Garden Sass,” and “Biled Doughnuts” seem to have been the outstanding dishes; and here and there on the document there is some quaint and curious information such as:

“Big men are expected to eat at least fifty pennies worth—if this is beyond their capacity they are requested to leave the scraps in the little baskets at the door.”

“Nabor Zodiga Turner will be there to see that nobody indulges in more levity than is becoming and also to see that nobody eats more baked beans than is consistent with these fashionable times.”

“Big men are supposed to eat fifty pennys worth. If they cannot get away with it all they can leave the fragments in the little baskets at the door.”

“Greate-Greate Grandmother Bates who scared ye British out of Ye Scituate Harboure in ye War of 1812 will play ye fife.”

“Ye worldly amusements will begin with some sacred tunes and some worldly pastimes

after which the company may prudently smile."

American Army of Two

During the war of 1812 the harbor of Scituate, Mass., was entered by two British barges, greatly to the terror of the inhabitants. There was no man-of-war nor any soldiers to protect them. Before the British barges reached the harbor they were seen from the lighthouse by two girls, Rebecca and Abigail Bates, who gave the alarm to the village. There were two large vessels laden with flour lying in the harbor, and toward these the British went. The girls from the lighthouse saw the proceedings and thought something should be done; so Rebecca seized a fife and Abigail a drum, and walking down the beach in the direction of Boston they got behind the sand hills out of sight of the British and then, turning round, marched toward Scituate fifeing and drumming for dear life. The British heard the music, and, without a minute's delay, turned right round and went to sea again.

AMERICAN ARMY OF TWO

"Abbie, the Drummer, one of the American army of two in the war of 1812, drove from our shore two British barges, saved two vessels laden with flour from capture and crew from prison with Drum and fife.

(Signed) ABBIE BATES aged 82

Born in 1797

Scituate Harbor, Mass.

“REBECCA W. BATES—Born 1793 Aged 86.

One of the American army of two in the war of 1812 who with her sister aged fifteen years saved two large vessels laden with flour and the crew from being taken by the British off Scituate Harbor, Mass.

(Signed) REBECCA the Fifer.”

The above, a personal contribution, is now in the Old South collection in Case No. 10.

Governor Andros

Passing now to the east end of the Meeting House, we notice on the wall a large oil painting, of a very remarkable character, which calls for a little explanation. In the year 1686, when the Royal Governor Andros came over from England, he immediately called a meeting of the ministers in the Old State House on Washington Street and tried to arrange for church room for the Episcopalians. But the Puritan ministers of the day seemed to have been unanimously against anything of the kind. At any rate, Sir Andros replied somewhat as follows: “I am Governor, and I will take the Old South Meeting House, and when we get through with our service on Sunday the regular congregation can take its turn.” But as it happened, on the following Sunday the Episcopalians kept possession until two o’clock or later, while the Puritans remained outside on the sidewalk on Washington or Marlboro Street, kicking their heels and fighting mad. This is the scene depicted by the artist on the canvas. On the

right, Governor Andros is seen entering the building followed by his clergyman and a string of cavaliers, and on the left-hand side of the picture stand groups of Puritans in angry and defiant mood. A short time ago, after I had explained the historic occasion to a group of visitors, a lady remarked, "Well, seeing that I am an Episcopalian myself, I look on that picture with mingled emotions." "Mingled Emotions," as they say, is "good"; and that reminds me that a few days later, in running over the same story at the same place, an old gentleman said to me: "Emotion! Why yes, emotion cuts quite a figure sometimes, does it not? In fact, once upon a time there seems to have been considerable of it in our family. You see, my name is Gridley, and we are Boston people. In Revolutionary times, the Gridleys were quite busy religiously and otherwise. One of the original Gridley settlers was a particular friend and ardent supporter of Anne Hutchinson—so much so, indeed, that he became a marked man, and was finally arrested for heresy. Some of the proceedings in those days look to us very much like lynch law. At any rate, my ancestor was forthwith deprived of his gun and driven out into the wilderness. Under these strenuous circumstances, my ancestor had three sons. The first was named 'Repent,' the second 'Believe,' and the third 'Tremble.' I," said Mr. Gridley, with considerable emotion, "am descended from 'Tremble.'" This custom of driving so-called "heretics" out into the wilderness seems to have been a popular pastime in the early days. In the Boston police records dated 1659, we read as follows:

“Peter Pearson, Judith Brown and George Wilson for religious reasons were whipped thro the town to the Wilderness, tied to a cart-tail the executioner having prepared a cruel instrument wherewith to tear their flesh.”

THE OLD GRANARY BURIAL GROUND

JEROME GRIDLEY

1701–1767

Father of the Boston Bar
Provincial Grand Master
of

Masons in North America
1755–1767

Attorney General

Learned Jurist

Public Spirited Citizen

This Monument

was erected to his memory
by the

Most Worshipfull Grand Lodge
of

Ancient Free and Accepted Masons
in

Massachusetts

and

Dedicated by Most Worshipfull

MELVIN MAYNARD JOHNSON

Grand Master

May 11, 1916.

The Prophet's Bowl

Hanging on the wall of the Old South until quite recently was a sort of Indian tray called the Prophet's Bowl. It was captured at the battle of Tippecanoe. It was simply a receptacle in which an Indian doctor concocted what you may call his bullet-proof medicine. It seemed to work all right until the heat of the battle in the afternoon, when the fatalities among the Red Skins became alarming, and messengers were sent to the medicine man to give him the particulars and incidentally to tell him what they thought of his medicine. Being pressed by the messengers for an explanation, he indignantly retorted that he knew what the trouble was with the medicine—*the women had been meddling with it*. No use talking—the story of the apple in the Garden of Eden will not down. You will find it again and again, in various forms, in the folklore of the Indians. Hope springs eternal in the universal breast. Well, so does curiosity. Once upon a time, you may remember a clergyman was a little upset when late comers—rattling the doors, I suppose—disturbed the congregation. In fact, almost everybody in church turned round to have a look at the late comers. The minister determined to put a stop to it, and finally told the people to pay no attention to the door, as he would announce the late comers himself as they came in. All went well for a while; but one day when he announced Mr. and Mrs. Brown, nobody seemed to be interested. When, however, the minister quietly added, “Mrs. Brown has a new bonnet,” the

congregation as a unit turned around to have a look at it!

Thomas White's Wine Cellar

And then again, as a side line (how times have changed!) in Case No. 8, we read that

"Thomas White has for sale at his wine cellar under the Old South a choice assortment of old Cognac Brandy, Cherry Rum, Holland Geneva, a few groce of Old Bottled Cider." [And to give the cellar additional atmosphere, I suppose:] "First chop Spanish Cigars and 50 quintals of Dumb Fish." [I thought all fish were dumb—but that's another story!]

Mind Your Business

Some of the emblems and mottoes on the old-time currency are quite interesting. Evidently the early colonists were in doubt, and so was Theodore Roosevelt, as to the good taste applied to the currency of the 1776 motto "Speramus in Te Domine"; so in the Old South Collection we find numerous substitutes or propositions for a change, such as "Perennis," "Perseverando," "Serenabit," and then, finally, under the old-fashioned sun dial (time flies!) the most sensible advice of all in regard to money matters, "*Mind your business.*"

Editorial on Swearing

And here is a pretty kettle of fish about swearing:

EDITORIAL ON SWEARING

from the *Massachusetts Spy* or
Worcester Gazette—January 22, 1784

“The custom or habit which I shall take notice of at this time is the habit of cursing and swearing. Few habits are more strong, and as it creeps upon a man gradually, it may not be improper here to point out its progress which I make to be the following:

- (1) On my word begat on my Honour and on my honour begat By Gad.
- (2) By Gad begat By G—d, By G—d, begat By the Lord, and By the Lord begat By Jasus who was born in Ireland. . . . &c., &c., &c.

“From the above accounts of the generations of oaths and curses it is plain that if a man begins with the least he may, in time, imperceptibly arrive at the greatest, therefore, let every man who has acquired a habit of cursing and swearing inspect the above table and see how far he is advanced. By this he may trace back his degeneracy and recover his former purity of speech. . . .

“Whether the army and navy cursing and swearing should be abolished entirely I am not able to determine. However, no advice can be better than Shakespeare’s Hamlet gives his Mother and which I shall conclude with:

“Refrain tonight
And that shall lend a Kind of Easiness
To the next abstinence.”

From Old South Collection, Case No. 17.

A Curious Old Bible

At the southeast end of the building in one of the cases is a curious old Bible which merits a word in passing. Judge Denny was the owner, and the date on the volume is 1805. Mr. Denny was certainly something of a student, with the figuring out of strange dates and totals as a side hobby. On a flyleaf of this Bible, after a little summary of the evidence on the subject, he figured out the exact date of the creation of the world to be 5,779 years, 6 months, 10 days back from 1805, and on top of this interesting information he proceeded to count the number of books, chapters, verses, words, and letters in the Old Testament—the letters, for example, totaling 2,740,000. He then figured out the totals for the New Testament in the same way. Dear Judge Denny! What a delightful, persistent, and ingrained lover of our much-neglected Bible you must have been! Yours truly—The Twentieth Century. And referring to the Bibles in the Old South collection, one may well pause for a minute to consider the tremendous significance of the popular discovery of the volume in the fifteenth century. Without doubt this was the primary and the greatest event in the English story of religious and political freedom.

"So far as the English nation was concerned," wrote the historian Green, "no history, no romance, hardly any poetry existed in the English tongue when the Bible was first ordered to be set up in churches. Sunday after Sunday, day after day, the crowds that gathered round Bonner's Bibles in the nave of St. Paul's, or the family group that hung on the words of the Geneva Bible in the devotional exercises at home, were leavened with a new literature."

And out of this same Bible, let us remember, with the passing of the years, came that bold spirit of inquiry which launched the Puritan on his momentous campaign and led and is still leading the way to liberty and enlightenment all over the world. But, alas, the average American on the street today never dreams of associating the Bible with the Battle of Bunker Hill!

"A noble book! All men's book! It is our first and oldest statement of the never-ending problem—man's destiny, and God's ways with him here on earth; and all in such free flowing outlines, grand in its sincerity, in its simplicity, in its epic melody, and repose of reconciliation."

What Thomas Carlyle had to say about the book of Job is intensely true of the Book as a whole, and the Old South Meeting House in Boston is a reminder of this spirit and of these memories.

As we proceed with our story of the Old South, let us keep our attention fixed on the signal lights in the belfries of the past and watch for the lessons. Energy,



Paul Revere,

initiative, adventure, leadership—these personal qualities, conspicuous signals in the old-time belfries, are today the red blood of our hopes for the future. Believe me, there was no such place as Easy Street for young or old in New England, for example, when George Washington, Henry Knox, Paul Revere, Joseph Warren, James Otis, John Hancock, and Samuel Adams were making American history in terms of pluck, devotion, and sacrifice. Today we need the spirit of these men—yes, and of Theodore Roosevelt, in every community, to interpret the significance of muscle, grit, and character in the destiny of this great Republic.

Paul Revere's Regiment

And, in addition, when the attention of visitors is directed to some of the ancient documents in the display cases and on the walls, a much wider range of historical interest is immediately aroused. Take the roster of Paul Revere's famous regiment, for example, from the drummer boys up to the Colonel, signed and perhaps written by himself. Every name on this military list is today, as then, a sort of symbol of New England character and patriotism. Then again, we have the minutes of the Tea Party meeting held right in this building in 1773, which ended with a manifesto antedating and certainly foreshadowing the Declaration of Independence:

“VOTED—that it is the Determination of this Body to carry their Votes and Resolutions

The Earthquake, a Divine Visitation

A

S E R M O N

Preached to the *Old Church* in BOSTON

January 8, 1756

BEING

A Day of *Public Humiliation* and *Prayer*
throughout the Province of the *Massachusetts*
Bay in NEW-ENGLAND

Upon OCCASION

of the repeated Shock of an EARTHQUAKE on
this Continent, and the very destructive *Earthquake*
and *Inundations* in divers Parts of *Europe*, all
in the Month of November last.

By THOMAS FOXCROFT A.M.

One of the Pastors of the said Church

BOSTON Printed and Sold by S. KNEELAND
Queen-Street and T. RAND in Cornhill MDCCLVI

into Execution at the Risque of their Lives and Property.”

Of additional interest also on the south wall is “The Last Will and Testament of Mary Norton bequeathing the property known as the Old South Church to Captain Davis and others for church purposes and for no other use, purpose or intent whatsoever”; and so it goes clear around to the north-east corner, to Miss Annie Haven Thwing’s interesting model of the old town itself in Revolutionary days, with its fifteen churches, 18,000 inhabitants and 2,200 dwelling houses.

The Bible Explains

ISAI . XXIX . 6 .

Thou shalt be visited of the Lord of Hosts with
Earthquake and great Noise

The Earth waxes old as doth a Garment and
an old Garment easily admits of Rents

Consequently as the World grows old in sin
and the final Dissolution approaches we may
reasonably expect a greater Frequency of this
Divine Judgment.

Death and Funeral of Washington

For the rest, perhaps the most noteworthy exhibit in the Old South Meeting House today, or in the city for that matter, is a document or program (exhibited by George H. Homer of Clarendon Hills) descriptive

of the funeral procession through the streets of Boston on January 9, 1800, in commemoration of the death and services of the great Revolutionary leader, George Washington.

This famous document, hanging on the south wall of the Meeting House in all the quaint originality of its type and expression, might fittingly be on display in the public schools and in public buildings. It is one of the great historical credits of the City. It throws light on the democratic handling of a procession in the street of the city in those days. But above all, it is a striking testimony of the respect and affection of the inhabitants "For the Memory of the great, the good and beloved Washington."

CHAPTER VIII

The Old South (*continued*)*Visitors' Stories*

The way visitors are entertained in the Old South Meeting House today and for many years in the past has led to very interesting results. As a rule the usual Boston method is and has been simply to boost Boston and New England descriptively and otherwise to the limit, and to let it go at that. But the reasonable discovery has been made that when the guide finds out just where his visitor comes from, and his personal and family associations with the early history of New England, a point of human contact has been arrived at of the most interesting description. Practically every State in the Union, in large or small, has a New England background. Naturally, when a guide displays an intimate knowledge of this fact, the visitor immediately takes a hand in the conversation. Hence an accumulation of visitors' stories in the Old South Meeting House of great human interest to the world at large:

Mrs. Mabel Seaman Wilder—Clear Lake, Iowa
—Descendant Captain John Seaman, King
Philip's War.

Ashton Wilson—Charleston, W. Va.—Descendant of John Cotton, also of Augustine Washington.

Evan Malbone—Chester, Pa.—Descendant
Isaak Johnson.

A. J. Sterling—Bridgeport, Conn.

“I am 85 years old—my grandfather, not my great-grandfather, mind you, fought seven years in the Revolutionary war and made his own sword.”

L. D. Adams—Brockton, Mass.

“My husband is a direct descendant of Crocker Sampson of Kingston, Mass., who served seven years in the Revolutionary War. I have in my possession Crocker Sampson’s certificate of membership in The Society of the Cincinnati, signed by George Washington and Henry Knox. I have also the identical colonial script or bills which he received for his patriotic service. These notes are still uncut from the original sheets. Mr. Sampson also received a grant of land in Ohio. Incidentally, I may say, this colonial money was of little or no value and the land in Ohio has not yet been located.”

J. Irving Reichner—Philadelphia, Pa.

“A direct descendant of Major John Fenwick who under command of Oliver Cromwell kept order at the execution of Charles I. Major Fenwick came to America and founded Salem, N.J., in 1675. Lady Fenwick and others are buried at Saybrook, Conn., just about—in fact,

on the same farm—where Yale University had its beginnings.”

H. W. Sewall—Medfield, Mass.—Whose great-great-grandfather was a minister of the Old South and whose father was Judge Sewall of the Old South and Salem witch trial fame.

Later I told the story to another visitor and this was his reply:

“Isn’t it strange how people come together after two or three hundred years! Did Miss Sewall register?”

“She did,” I replied.

“Well,” said he, “I will also. My name is Chamberlin. I was born in Cambridge on Brattle Street—you can look up my ancestry if you care to go to the trouble. I am a direct descendant of one of those Salem witches.”

But the story is not yet finished. Some time later a lady from Chicago heard me speaking about the Sewalls, and afterwards she came up to me and said: “I think I can give you another story to add to yours. My name is Katherine Adams Wells from Chicago. I am a direct descendant of Governor Phips, who put a stop to all that witchcraft nonsense.”

David Kennison

Talking about the Tea Party one of our visitors said to me:

“I want to tell you what I know about the last survivor of those Tea Party heroes. You see my name

is Tozier. I hail from Waterville, Maine. I work for a man named Kennison. In the early days the ancestor of the Waterville family lived in Boston and was a member of the Tea Party. But in those days he spelled his name Kenniston. On the morning after the boys dumped the tea into the harbor Kenniston dropped the *t* out of his name and the family has been without it ever since. This man Kennison lived in or around Boston until he was eighty years old. Then he went West, and now the City of Chicago has a monument to his memory in Lincoln Park: 'To David Kennison (without the *t*), the last survivor of the Boston Tea Party.' "

I was telling this story to a man from Chicago the other day, and this is what I gathered from his reply:

"Look here," said he, "you don't want to give Chicago any credit for taking care of its antiquities, for the city doesn't deserve it. The truth of the Kennison affair is just this: Some years ago, when the city was fixing up and enlarging Lincoln Park, they came across a cemetery, had to move it out of the town—got along all right till they came to the Kennison tomb. The Kennison family said: 'Nothing doing. The tomb is here to stay, you understand.' Then the Kennison family went to law with the city to straighten the matter out and finally won the case, hands down." Thus, as my informant said, "the Kennison tomb is in Lincoln Park today, not because the city wanted it to be there, but because the Kennisons wouldn't get out. So the city put a nice little railing around the Kennison

grave, also an imposing monument to the last survivor of the Boston Tea Party; and that is the way," said our visitor, "Chicago takes care of its antiquities."

W. W. Ransom

"My name is W. W. Ransom. My ancestor W. W. Ransom was discharged from the Revolutionary Army at Philadelphia in the year 1777. His son W. W. Ransom was discharged from the army at Sackett Harbor, N.Y., in 1812 after that war. His son W. W. Ransom was discharged from the army at Fortress Monroe in 1865 after the Civil War. His son W. W. Ransom was discharged from the army at Philadelphia in 1898 after the Spanish American War. His son W. W. Ransom and two brothers were discharged from the army in the year 1919 after the world war. Now," continued the old gentleman, "I am mighty glad to visit New England and the Old South Meeting House and to see for myself the hallowed places where so many of our old folks, in the olden times, started in business."

Mary Dyer and the Quakers

"I come from Germantown, Pennsylvania," said an other visitor. "Germantown, if you remember, was the home of Gilbert Stuart, the famous painter of the Washington portrait. Well, my middle name is Wanton," the gentleman continued, "and if you will consult the facsimile of the warrant for the execution of Charles the First which hangs on the wall over there you will find the name Valentine Wanton down as one of the signers. Of course we all know the story

of Mary Dyer the Quakeress, hanged on Boston Common in the year 1660—was it not? Well, my ancestor Wanton was Captain of the Guard on that much-to-be-lamented occasion. After the execution, Edward went home and said to his wife: ‘My dear, they are hanging God’s people on the Common. I am sick of the business.’ So Edward snapped his sword in two over his knee, threw the other emblems of his office down onto the floor and exclaimed, ‘For the future I am a Quaker!’

“Where do you suppose,” queried my visitor, “these liberal-minded people headed for in those days?” “Rhode Island,” I replied. “Yes, sir, four Governors of Rhode Island, one after the other, that is only part of the record of the famous Wanton family. Three out of the four of these Governors, we are told, were strictly Quakers—the last, it is said, wandered a little from the fold, but fell in love with a pretty Quaker girl; and the family history is warrant for the statement that in a discussion with the young lady about religion, he exclaimed, ‘Ye renounce your religion, I renounce mine, we join the Church of England and both of us go to the Devil.’ And, by the way, General Elisha Dyer, whose forebear was Mary Dyer, was Governor of Rhode Island. In this way, the generations as they pass by, annihilate the mistakes and the prejudices of their predecessors.”

Running Antelope

In the Old South collection until recently there was an old Indian war club. It sported three ferocious-

looking blades. Originally it was the property of Running Antelope, a notable chief of the Sioux Indians. Some years ago, when the survivors of the Grand Army of the Republic assembled in Boston, a certain Major Hammond from Indiana paid a visit to the Old South Meeting House. Calling my attention to this war club, he exclaimed: "Hello! where did you get that? And I wonder if you know the story of Running Antelope?" Confessing my ignorance, he continued: "Well, you see, after the Civil War he—Running Antelope—became an intimate chum of mine, and it was just at that time General Grant was making a big effort to get possession of some of the Sioux territory for reservation purposes. In fact, General Sherman paid a visit to the Indians with this end in view. Well, Sir, at a big Indian pow-wow to talk the matter over, Running Antelope was the first speaker and I am now going to tell you exactly what he said.

"‘My brothers,’ he commenced, ‘since our last meeting on this subject, privately as you know among ourselves, I have been talking to a man in a long black coat’—he meant the priest. ‘And this man informed me that these white people have a God and this same God sent his son down to visit them and to teach them how to behave themselves. And what did these white people do? Why, they up and killed him, the Son of their God! Now,’ continued Running Antelope, ‘I beseech you, my brothers, have as little as possible to do with these white people; they will use you just as they treated the Son of their God. What more can you expect?’

“And this settled the business for the time being,” continued Major Hammond. “General Sherman returned to Washington from a fruitless errand. General Grant, however, was not discouraged. After a while he invited a delegation of the Indians, with Running Antelope at their head, to visit Washington, and later they all set out with General Sherman, as guide and entertainer, on a State-circling tour. They visited Baltimore, Albany, Boston, New York, and Philadelphia, and so back again to Washington for another conference on the land question, and as usual Running Antelope was the principal speaker. Addressing his fellow Indians he said to them:

“‘My Brothers, I have changed my mind. My advice now is, sell your lands, and the sooner the better. We shall gain nothing by further discussion or waiting. You see I have come out of all this palavering and junketing with the single idea in my mind that we poor Indians in number and importance are like these miserable fingers on my hand and the white people are like the grass on the prairies—What’s the use? Sell at once!’ ”

Then Major Hammond took out his pocketbook and said to the writer: “You see this grand-looking Indian on this five-dollar bill. Well, Sir, that is Running Antelope. Won’t you please keep the bill to illustrate the story? Tell your visitors about Major Hammond and remind them that this picture on Uncle Sam’s money is warrant enough for the conclusion that Running Antelope deserved well of his country.”

Heating the Old South

How did they heat the "Old South" in the early days was a question I was recently called upon to answer. The explanation is something like this: If we consult the "way back" authorities on the subject, our curiosity will be repaid with the statement that once upon a time the congregation in the Meeting House was radically divided into two sections, "Stoveites" and "Anti-Stoveites." The former demanded heat from stoves; the latter contended that the physical as well as the spiritual warmth which they derived from the sermons was sufficient for the purpose. A heated controversy on the subject was kept up and continued for something like twenty-five years. Finally, they began to charge the men seven pennies for every *dog* they brought into the church. The men kept the dogs in the pews and used them as footwarmers. All "hunk," as they say, for the men! Then the women brought in cowhide muffs containing hot-baked potatoes for the children. The youngsters rolled the potatoes round and round in their little hands, and finally swallowed them, much to the disgust of the minister, who was persistently and continuously "Anti-Stoveite." But why—may we not ask—did the minister object to the use of fire in the church? The answer is as simple as A B C. Looking over an old sermon one day, I came across the following explanation: "Some of you people," wrote the minister, "understand a little about *fire*; most of you will understand a good deal more about it before you get through. But this idea of bringing the devil's ammunition into

the church for the purpose of warming your miserable hands and feet has my emphatic disapproval. Go right home," continued the admonition, "and cook all the potatoes you care to, for in this way you are putting the devil under tribute, but you shall not bring fire into this church to warm your miserable hands and feet." Hands and feet were miserable in those days—no wonder. And please bear in mind that the emblem of repentance and sanctity in those days was a hair shirt worn next to the skin.

One day a group of fifty or sixty school superintendents paid a visit to the Old South Meeting House. When I spoke about dogs in the pews, one of these gentlemen cut into my story with the following side line, much to the entertainment of his audience: "My grandfather," said this gentleman, "was fond of telling his friends that on one occasion he had hardly taken his seat in church when two of these dogs got loose and began chasing each other all over the Meeting House. Finally they engaged in a battle royal right in front of the pulpit and within reach of the elders or deacons. Now," continued the speaker, "I want to tell you that, according to my grandfather's story, this particular minister had a curious deep-down monotone voice. And furthermore, when he, the minister, started to read a hymn or a chapter in the Bible, he invariably carried it through to a finish, and nothing on earth could stop him, not even a dog fight.

"However, according to my grandfather's story," our visitor continued, "while the dog fight was in

progress the minister was reading a chapter from the Book of Samuel. As accurately as I can remember, it was as follows:

“‘And when the Philistine looked about and saw David he disdained him, for he was but a youth and ruddy and of a fair countenance.

“‘And the Philistine said unto David—“Hit them Deacon, hit them”—am I a dog that thou comest to me with staves? And the Philistine curst David by his Gods.

“‘Then said the Philistine to David—“Hit him on the head, Deacon”—come to me and I will give thy flesh to the fowls of the air and the beasts of the field.

“‘Then said David to the Philistine, “Thou comest to me with a sword and with a spear but I—“Hit the yellow dog Deacon, he began it”—come to thee in the name of the armies of Israel which thou hast defied’ ”—

The Old South Meeting House, according to Augustine Jones, was not heated until 1783, when peace came with the Mother Country. And even then there was a poetic protest:

“Extinct the sacred fire of love,
Our zeal grows cold and ded;
In House of God we fix a stove
To warm us in their stead.”

The Dedham Widows

In the First Parish Meeting House in Dedham, Mass., in the year 1642—I think it was—one person was appointed to whip these disturbing dogs out of the church

or keep them where they belonged in the pews. And furthermore, in the same town of Dedham, two widows were appointed to see that the bells were sufficiently rung on the Lord's Day. The persistent ringing of bells on the Lord's Day at this particular Meeting House, we are told, was a very good thing for the widows. It called public attention to their forlorn, unmarried situation. Even in those days it paid to advertise. Reasonably, then, to use a present-day and commonplace expression, the widows in Dedham "didn't do a thing" to those bells.

Be this as it may, the plight of the widows in those days was a matter of great public concern. From census to census they seem to have been increasing in numbers out of all proportion to the rest of the population. In the year 1742, the population of Boston was 16,000, including 1,200 widows. Now if you subtract a reasonable estimate of the men with their large families of children from the total population of 16,000, you will easily come to the conclusion that every other woman in the old town of Boston in 1742 was a widow, and this without any mention whatsoever of the old maids. The latter, however, were very few and very unpopular, for the reason, we are told, that if you only left an Old Maid alone long enough she inevitably developed into a witch. So much for the widows. Now for the bells!

CHAPTER IX

The Romance of the Bells

“More music hath a London bell
Than aught else up or down.
God rest the souls of them who wrought
The bells of London town.”

For a final adventure let us now pay a personal visit to the Old South Meeting House and inspect the Tower, the Bell Room and the Steeple. To begin with, I may say, I have carefully estimated the number of bricks in this outstanding section of the edifice—some 270,000, more or less. I have climbed the spiral stairway with its 210 narrow and dizzy footsteps. I have also measured the enormous timbers at the base of the tower on which the chambers above are supported. The lacing and bracing of the maze of woodwork between and surrounding these chambers is a marvel of old-time scaffoldry. Particularly strong and impressive is the Bell Room right over our heads. Note the four lattices of slats, north, south, east and west, for the broadcasting of the sound. But alas, what has become of the bell? The want of it is the one outstanding pity in the history of the Old South Meeting House. Indeed, the present generation seems to have lost sight of the service and significance of bells in the history of the race. To begin with, of course, our beautiful towers and steeples were designed and built for the accommodation

of clocks and bells. And, to tell the truth, there is hardly a step in human progress, on land or sea, in which clocks and bells have not figured with distinction. One hundred and fifty odd years ago, the Liberty Bell in Philadelphia rang out for the encouragement of a nation in revolt, a keynote for the coming centuries. To recall this memorable event and to remind the world of its all-embracing significance, this, 1926, was your peculiar privilege and mission. Then again, from time immemorial on ships, clocks and bells have been intermarried. You still have fog bells on your rockbound coasts; and right here, in your famous city, is there not, over all, a perpetual sensation of thankfulness when you listen to the clang of the life-saving ambulance as it whirls down the street on its errand of succor and love? The bell in the tower of the Old South Meeting House stood high in this praiseworthy record. In the early days the Old South bell was intimately associated with all manner of social, religious and political happenings. On many memorable occasions when the town or the liberties of the people were in danger, the Old South bell invariably came to the rescue. True, the Bell Room is still up here in the tower of the Meeting House, but I venture the question, what has become of the bell? This question is a reflection on personalities and management, and I am not interested in such controversies. Nevertheless, let me venture the prediction that the inspiration of a new bell in the Old South belfry would do more to keep alive the spirit of reverence and thankfulness among

all classes of people than any conceivable widening of your streets or doubling of your traffic.

“Ring in the valiant man and true
The larger heart, the kindlier hand;
Ring out the darkness of the land,
Ring in the Christ that is to be.”

Of course there are ghosts in this deserted tower. If the spirits of William Dawes, Paul Revere, James Otis, Sam Adams and Joseph Warren—yes, and of Mary Hemenway and Mary Norton—do not still inhabit and inspire the scene of their labors, your old-time landmarks have very little to say to the present generation.

“Lives of great men all remind us
We can make our lives sublime,
And, departing, leave behind us
Footprints on the sands of time.”

The average American, however, no longer believes in the romance of the spiritual world. You say you have never experienced in a spiritual way “the touch of a vanished hand or the sound of a voice that is still”? I pity you. And yet your Old South Meeting House, your “Sanctuary of Freedom” for the Western Hemisphere, will never regain the old-time nobilities that belong to it until in a measure, at any rate, you are able to appreciate these deep-seated and mysterious values. Time, I say, is a great believer in ghosts, whether in ancient belfries or in human hearts. Sometimes these God-sent apparitions return to plague you

with the pangs of neglected duty. Come ye, come ye, people of Boston, inheritors of a sacred trust, remember the Sabbath Day to keep it tuneful.

“The old mayor climbed the belfry tower,
The ringers ran by two by three;
‘Pull, if ye never pulled before:
Good ringers, pull your best,’ quoth he.
Play uppe, play uppe, O Boston bells,
Ply all your changes, all your swells,
Play uppe, ‘The Brides of Enderby.’ ”

. So much for the significance of the Old South bell
now for the story of the Steeple.



STAIRWAY LEADING TO PORT-HOLES IN OLD SOUTH TOWER

CHAPTER X

Father Time Praises Boston

The Old South Meeting House in Boston is, above all other qualifications and distinctions, a spiritual landmark. The writer is not so much interested in the letter as in the spirit of historical events. Your never-ending discussions about matters of fact, such as dates, locations and technical details, to me, in a general way, are matters of indifference. And the higher the level we reach in this old-time Puritan watch tower—for it still reflects the Puritan spirit—the greater becomes its spiritual enchantment. There is always an indefinable solemnity in the haunts of departed greatness. Dragging and squeezing yourself up the ever-narrowing passageway, you now finally arrive at the topmost round of the ladder, almost at the tip of the pinnacle, 183 feet up from the sidewalk. You are now on a level with the port-holes of the Meeting House.

The Eyelets of the City

Historically speaking, these little holes in the octangular sides of the steeple are the “eyelets” of the city of Boston. In an imaginative way, looking out and around through these eyelets, let us now take an historical survey of the city of Boston, using Time as our visionary spokesman and philosopher. Is there anything historical or otherwise that has not been written into Father Time’s notebook? Is there anything that

can escape the notice or the memory of this universal historian? In the early years of my service in this Meeting House, says Father Time, on an ever-memorable occasion, I peered through these same "eyelets," and, with bated breath, as it were, I followed the galloping outlines of Revere and Dawes on their world-famous mission. In all probability, the average citizen of Boston has never paid any attention to these "eyelets," but they have been taking critical notice of you. To chronicle the behavior and progress of your city, from this vantage point, from the very birth of your liberties until today, has been the peculiar function and privilege of Time. But alas, the people of Boston seem to be constitutionally incapable of considering their history through the eyelets of Time. Your memory is limited to your present condition and necessities. Before passing judgment on conditions of today, however, your calamity orators should take a glimpse at your city in the past, through the eyelets of the Old South Meeting House.

Boston Past and Present

Less than fifty years ago you had beggars and snatch thieves on nearly every street corner. Your far-famed Boston Common was little better than a public "resort." Your liquor interests were running the city. In the rear of nearly every "saloon" was a little back parlor, a "Chamber of Horrors," in which unmentionable crimes were perpetrated. Your "red light" districts—in actual fact, if not in theory—were protected by the police for the encouragement of gambling

and vice. On certain streets, the heads of soliciting women, upstairs and down, by day and by night, were to be seen at nearly every window. Your politics, your institutions, your progress itself were at the mercy of the grafters with headquarters (and this was not whisper) at the City Hall and the State House. Consequently, in the public service, "pull" and "appointment" were inseparable considerations. Merit was in hiding, while your scarlet city was seemingly buried under a cloak of public and private indifference. Fifty years ago, in all large cities in free-conditioned, free-willed America, this state of affairs was looked upon by consensus of public opinion as the unavoidable, the inevitable situation. And then, almost unheralded, morally, socially and economically, came the volcanic awakening of the twentieth century.

Time as the Oracle of Results

Time, however, is something more than a mere historian of details and particulars. Time is also the interpreter of long-drawn-out problems and the oracle of results. Make no mistake about it—during the past forty or fifty years the city of Boston has been making for herself a glorious record. She has scattered her "unavoidable and inevitable" situations to the winds and the phrase itself has been banished from her social and religious vocabularies. True, the threatening problems of today are tremendous. Let the world take heart of grace. Even these shall pass away. Boston is not a failure. Comparatively speaking, I say, you have today a well-ordered, a well-equipped, a clean city,

morally, physically and commercially healthy. In the length and breadth of your social and religious activities you now have one of the most intensely in earnest, most interesting and likable cities on the face of the earth. Such is the unbiased verdict of Time. And when in this way I recall the fascinating story of your princely domain, the debits and the credits of the centuries, your struggles, your failures and your triumphs, why, then, my soul

“Like to the lark at break of day arising
From sullen earth, sings hymns at heaven’s
gate.”

The Soul of the City

The Old Meeting House has had its say, and Time, peering through the visionary eyelets of the city, has delivered his message. The day has given way to the night, and already over the harbor yonder there is a dream-like suspicion of advancing light. To the spiritually-minded, every daybreak is a kind of Easter morning. On your famous monuments and churches the spirit of the dawn has a peculiar witchery. Familiar objects at this holy hour become unfamiliar and, for a few minutes, at any rate, Fantasy is the undisputed interpreter of outlines. At such a time, I say, one appreciates to the full the law-dispensing solemnity of the Dome on Beacon Hill, the historic splendor and quaintness of the Old State House, of Faneuil Hall, of the Old North Church, of King’s Chapel, and, above all and through all, the vibrant joy of human aspirations in the quivering spire and weather vane of the

THE SOUL OF A CITY



OLD SOUTH
MEETING HOUSE

OLD STATE
HOUSE

PAUL REVERE
HOUSE

PARK STREET
CHURCH



"Let it not
displease you therefore
inhabitants of this
Mecca City
that you are bidden
amidst the tumult and dazzle
of your busy lives to
listen for the few voices
and watch for the few lamps
which God has toned
and lighted to charm
and to guide you
that you may not learn
their sweetness by their
silence nor their light
by their decay."

OLD NORTH
CHURCH

FANEUIL
HALL

BOSTON
COMMON

ST. PAULS
CATHEDRAL



"SICUT PATRIBUS SIT DEUS NOBIS"

Old South Meeting House. These monuments, these memorials, these buildings, these fantasies, are living issues. In large and small, in spirit and in truth, this group of momentous memories is the Soul of your City. Forgetful or neglectful of these old-time spiritual values, your material progress from year to year is nothing but the echo of sounding brass and tinkling cymbal. "Let it not displease you, therefore, inhabitants of this mecca city, that you are bidden amidst the tumult and dazzle of your busy lives to listen for the few voices, and watch for the few lamps, which God has toned and lighted to charm and to guide you, that you may not learn their sweetness by their silence, nor their light by their decay."

But now, just before dawn, all over the world, for a few minutes only, Time has a contract with the silences. During this hushful period in the Old South Meeting House, upstairs or down, there is not a scintilla of sound to break the charm of its quiet vigil, save only the rhythmic to and fro of an old clock's heartbeat.

Will visitors to Boston from far and near, who, as it seems to me, so thoroughly appreciate the glorious traditions of New England, together with those clear-visioned and generous people in our midst who are doing their best to keep alive the story of heroic men and women, the founders of a nation, please look upon the contents of this little book as a personal tribute?

APPENDIX

The Old South Bells

There is a legend connected with the first Old South Bell that is not generally known in this community, as the circumstances transpired in the first century of the existence of Boston, and doubtless have no record easily to be got at. It came to me in the nature of an heirloom, and is, without doubt, a veritable relation.

Among the early grants of land to colonists was a large section in New Hampshire to Captain John Mason in 1621. In process of settling this territory, the town of Mason, which joins Townsend in Massachusetts and New Ipswich in New Hampshire, was evolved some time about 1715. The ancestors of Jonas Chickering and of George H. Davis, two of Boston's piano kings, along with my own progenitor, were connected with this evolution. The family of Mason, on their return to England, afterwards, as a mark of gratitude for the adoption of name by the town, forwarded to the residents this identical bell as a present. It was a small colony then, struggling for existence, and as there was no place in the precincts to hang a bell, even if the means could be raised for transportation and necessary charges, the matter was neglected so long that the bell was sold to cover expenses incurred, and was purchased by the Old South proprietors. If there was any surplus accruing from the sale of the bell, it probably went for the benefit of that

mysterious account headed "whom it may concern," for I don't believe the town of Mason ever received a dollar, though, in after years, when a "meeting-house" with a steeple was erected, the citizens did bewail the loss of that bell sadly.

W. L. ELLIOTT,
In *The Boston Transcript*,
March 31, 1885.

The Second Old South Bell

In Martin's "History of the Boston Stock Market," notes of current events during the present century were interspersed to relieve the monotony of figures. In those appended to 1816 we read as follows:

"In July a new bell, weighing fifteen hundred pounds, was placed in the Old South Church belfry, replacing one the gift of Captain Timothy Cunningham in 1728 which weighed twelve hundred pounds, and was acknowledged to be one of the clearest and most harmonious bells in New England. The new bell was cast in London. The old bell is said to have been cracked in ringing.

C. O. E.
In *The Boston Transcript*,
April 6, 1885.

The Story of the 1816 Bell (Continued)

6537. J. O. F. asks about the bell placed in the Old South Meeting House in July 1816. This bell

weighed 1600 pounds. About the year 1852 the writer, then a lad, climbed to the belfry and copied this inscription: "Cast by Jacob Mears and Son, London, 1816." I recall that two heavy iron bars had been strapped above the wooden headstock to act as counterweight, and to facilitate, as was supposed, the swinging of the bell. This procedure, as I came to know later, would have, in fact, precisely the opposite effect, and to it is due the destruction of many of the older bells of Boston. A more violent blow of the clapper was however produced as shown by its battered condition, and its sound mingling with the heavier bell of King's Chapel could be distinctly heard throughout the North End.

Upon the sale of the Meeting House on Washington Street the bell of 1816 with other objects of interest was reserved and I chanced to pass when it was being raised, July, 1876, to the campanile of the new church on Boylston Street. It had then been supplied with a new iron yoke in place of the original headstock. Again in June, 1895, I saw this bell for the last time, resting at the base of the tower. It was badly cracked at the sound bow, the point of impact with the clapper. At this time a new bell from Meneely Bell Company, Troy, N.Y., was being hoisted to the belfry. This bell, still in use, weighing perhaps 2200 pounds, gives out a superior mellow tone, audible over a wide area.

A. H. N.

In "Notes and Queries," *Boston Transcript*,
November 25, 1922.

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